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Dean Logan's Blog

RIP Anthony Lewis; Long Live Gideon v. Wainwright!

Posted by David Logan on 04/04/2013 at 02:53 PM

March 2013 was the 50th anniversary of *Gideon v. Wainwright*, which guaranteed every citizen a constitutional right to counsel in cases involving serious criminal allegations. Gideon is acknowledged as one of the most important decisions of the Supreme Court, and as lawyers, judges, and law students gathered at RWU Law for a program saluting Gideon, it also was an opportunity to mark the passing of Anthony Lewis, the Pulitzer-Prize winning author of the iconic book about the case, *Gideon's Trumpet*.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gideon%27s_Trumpet

The program began with me saying a few words about the reporter everyone called “Tony,” as I had the honor and pleasure of meeting him on several occasions: while I was on the faculty at Wake Forest, Tony came to campus twice at my invitation, and more recently, Tony participated in RWU Law’s “Supreme Semester” programs at RWU in the 2007 academic year. As I told the *Providence Journal*, Tony was a hero of mine, with a gift for making complex constitutional issues not just understandable to the general public, but making them thrilling.

<http://law.rwu.edu/story/logan-and-horwitz-lewis-and-gideon>

Our celebration of the Gideon anniversary was two-fold: first was the screening of a new documentary, “Defending Gideon,” narrated by Martin Sheen and produced by the Constitution Project. We then followed with an all-star line-up of lawyers and judges who have deep experience with the challenges of implementing Gideon’s legacy:

- Tara Allen, Assistant Federal Defender, District of RI
- Gerald J. Coyne, Deputy Attorney General, RIAG
- Debra Krupp, Training Coordinator, Committee for Public Counsel Services, MA
- Magistrate Charles J. Levesque – Family Court, former RI State Senator
- The Honorable John J. McConnell – U.S. District Court, RI
- Mary McElroy – The Public Defender, RI

The event was moderated by two of our faculty experts on Criminal Law, Associate Dean Andy Horwitz and Professor Priya Lakhi, Acting Director of our Criminal Defense Clinic. The event was sponsored by the Alliance, the American Civil Liberties Union – RWU Law Student Chapter, The Association for Public Interest Law, the Criminal Law Society, and the Multicultural Law Students Association. And, a special shout-out to 1L Curtis Pouliot-Alvarez, who labored long and successfully to pull the complex events together.



